HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

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PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Crave

PHOTO CAPTION: Connor Storrie as Ilya Rozanov in "Heated Rivalry"

HOLLYWOOD — On Feb. 28, "Saturday Night Live's" host was **Connor Storrie** ... someone I'd never heard of before! I Googled him and learned that he is 26 years old and played a young inmate in "Joker: Folie a Deux" (2024), which starred **Joaquin Phoenix** and **Lady Gaga** ($208 million grosses against a $200 million cost).

In November 2025, Storrie starred in six episodes of the queer Crave network series "Heated Rivalry" (which has been renewed for a second season for 2027). This limited series was so impressive that it prompted "SNL" to ask him to host.

Storrie recently wrote, produced and directed the microbudget sci-fi film "Transaction Planet," which was shot entirely on an iPhone camera. He has also upcoming roles in the comedy film "Peaked" with **Dua Lipa**, **Laura Dern** and **Amy Sedaris**, as well as the crime thriller "Turpentine" with **Melissa McCarthy**.

Additionally, he wrapped "The Bell Jar" with **Carey Mulligan** and **Ike Barinholtz** in September. He's also in talks to be the villain in "Deadpool & Wolverine" director **Shawn Levy's** reboot of Marvel's "Ghost Rider," which is led by **Ryan Gosling**. "Ghost Rider" (2007) cost $120 million and grossed $229 million, while "Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance" (2011) cost $57 million and grossed $149.3 million.

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The ever-active **Nicolas Cage** has completed five films and has one in production. He plays famed football coach John Madden for director **David O. Russell** in "Madden," which also stars **Christian Bale**, **Kathryn Hahn**, **John Mulaney** and **Sienna Miller**. It opened in select theaters on Nov. 11. Cage is following this up with "Best Pancakes in the County," co-starring **Justin Long** and **Ravi Patel**. It's set to open in theaters and digitally on Nov. 20.

Next up is the spy-adventure film "Fortitude" with **Matthew Goode** and **Ben Kingsley**, which is supposed to be released this year but doesn't have an official date as yet. Then Cage has "Lords of War" with **Bill Skarsgard**, which opens in January 2027, as well as "The Prince" with **J.K. Simmons**, **Giancarlo Esposito**, **Andy Garcia**, **Simon Rex**, **Beverly D'Angelo** and **Wayne Brady** (no release date yet).



Courtesy of Crave

Connor Storrie as Ilya Rozanov in "Heated Rivalry"

As if these weren't enough, he's currently shooting the action-thriller "Parrish," which is set 30 years after a nuclear apocalypse. Cage won an Oscar for "Leaving Las Vegas" (1995) and has starred in over 120 films.

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HBO's producing a limited series of **Alfred Hitchcock's** 1963 classic scary film "The Birds," which starred **Tippi Hedren**, **Suzanne Pleshette** and **Rod Taylor**. It cost $3.3 million and grossed $11.4 million. "Succession" star **Sarah Snook** — who's won an Emmy, a Tony, two Golden Globes, and two Actor Awards — will star in Hedren's original role.

Based on a short story by **Daphne du Maurier**, the film received mixed reviews during its original release, but over time, its reputation has improved so much that it's now considered one of the greatest horror films of all time. However, it was Hitchcock who saved the film from extinction when he created a brilliant ad campaign on giant billboards all over the country that drove English teachers absolutely cuckoo. ... Hitchcock's tagline was "The birds is coming!"

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